



Borough of Great Torrington

ANNUAL REPORT
of the
Medical Officer of Health
and the
Borough Surveyor and
Public Health Inspector

For the Year ending
31st December, 1969

Public Health Staff.

Medical Officer of Health:

C. F. R. BRIGGS, M.B., B.S.; L.R.C.P., M.R.C.S.

Gresham, Rack Park Close, Torrington.

Telephone 3222.

Borough Surveyor and Public Health Inspector:

P. F. R. E. SYMONS, M.R.S.H., M.A.P.H.I.

Council Offices, 6, Halsdon Terrace, Torrington.

Telephone 2441 or 2442.

Housing Officer and Additional Public Health Inspector:

P. McCANDLISH, D.M.A., M.A.P.H.I.

Building Surveyor and Clerk of Works:

S. WOOD, A.I.C.W.

Committees:

HOUSING, SANITARY, BUILDING and
IMPROVEMENTS, SPECIAL SEWERAGE.

Council Offices,
6, Halsdon Terrace,
Great Torrington.

Mr. Mayor, Aldermen and Councillors,

We have pleasure in presenting our report for the year ending 31st December, 1969.

The year was a very healthy one apart from the influenza epidemic which started in December and continued into 1970. There was no other epidemic apart from a mild outbreak of rubella in June—July.

The corrected birth rate was 20.5 per 1,000 population: that for the whole of England and Wales was 16.3.

The corrected death rate was 10.7 per 1,000 population: the figure for the whole of England and Wales was 11.9.

We are,

Yours faithfully,

C. F. R. BRIGGS,

Medical Officer of Health.

P. F. R. E. SYMONS,

Public Health Inspector and Surveyor.

Borough of Great Torrington

1969

INDUSTRIES AND OCCUPATIONS.

Abattoir.	Agriculture.	Agricultural Engineering.
Cattle Breeding Centre.	Children's Clothing.	Glassware.
Glove Making.	Milk Processing.	Plastics.

GENERAL STATISTICS.

Area (statute acres)	...	...	...	...	...	3,592
Mid-year Population (official estimate)	...	...	...	...	...	3,080
Number of Inhabited Houses	...	...	...	...	...	1,200
(Number of Council-owned Houses)	...	...	...	...	...	330
Rateable Value	...	...	...	...	...	£115,204
Product of Penny Rate	...	...	...	...	...	£455

VITAL STATISTICS.

Year	Mid-year Population	Corrected Birth Rate	Corrected Death Rate
1969	3,080	20.5	10.7
1968	3,010	19.4	9.1
1967	2,920	19.5	9.8
1966	2,880	14.9	14.4
1965	2,880	15.7	12.1

BIRTHS

Live Births					Male	Female	Total
Legitimate	...	...	...	...	34	15	49
Illegitimate	...	...	...	...	1	3	4

Comparability factor for births—1.19

						England & Wales
Corrected birth rate per 1,000 population	20.5					16.3

The birth rate in England and Wales continues to fall, and is now the lowest since 1957.

Still Births					Male	Female	Total
Legitimate	...	...	...	...	1	—	1
Illegitimate	...	...	...	...	—	—	—

						England & Wales
Stillbirth rate per 1,000 total live and still births	19.0					13.0

Infant Mortality	Male	Female	Total
Deaths of infants under 1 year of age	1	—	1

This infant died of prematurity at the age of five hours.

		England & Wales	
Infant mortality rate per 1,000 live births	19	18	

Perinatal Mortality	Male	Female	Total
Stillbirths and deaths under one week of age.	2	—	2
		England & Wales	
Rate per 1,000 total births	37	23	

Maternal Mortality

There were no deaths from childbirth or from abortion.

All maternity patients who wish to have their babies in Hospital now go to Barnstaple or to Bideford.

There were six babies born at home in Torrington during the year.

DEATHS Male 23 Female 31 Total 54
Comparability factor for deaths—0.61

Corrected death rate per 1,000 population 10.7 England & Wales 11.9

NUMBER OF DEATHS BY CAUSE

Cause of Death				Sex	Total All Ages
B19(3)	Malignant Neoplasm, Stomach...	...	...	M	—
				F	1
B19(4)	Malignant Neoplasm, Intestine...	...	...	M	1
				F	1
B19(6)	Malignant Neoplasm, Lung, Bronchus	...	...	M	1
				F	—
B19(7)	Malignant Neoplasm, Breast	...	...	M	—
				F	1
B19(11)	Other Malignant Neoplasms	...	...	M	1
				F	1
B26	Chronic Rheumatic Heart Disease	...	...	M	—
				F	1
B27	Hypertensive Disease	...	...	M	—
				F	3
B28	Ischaemic Heart Disease	...	...	M	7
				F	5
B29	Other Forms of Heart Disease	...	...	M	2
				F	6
B30	Cerebrovascular Disease	...	...	M	4
				F	1
B46(5)	Other Diseases of Circulatory System	...	...	M	1
				F	8
B32	Pneumonia	...	...	M	1
				F	—
B33(1)	Bronchitis and Emphysema	...	...	M	2
				F	—
B46(6)	Other Diseases of Respiratory System	...	...	M	1
				F	—
B38	Nephritis and Nephrosis	...	...	M	—
				F	1
B39	Hyperplasia of Prostate	...	...	M	1
B43	Birth Injury, Difficult Labour, etc.	...	...	M	1
				F	—
BE48	All Other Accidents	...	...	M	—
				F	2
TOTAL ALL CAUSES				M	23
				F	31

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

In June-July there was an outbreak of rubella (German measles) mainly among the school-children. This is not a notifiable disease, so no numbers are available.

The influenza epidemic started in December, and continued into January, 1970. It was very widespread.

The following cases of infectious disease were notified during the year: -

Scarlet fever	...	...	...	...	8
Measles	...	...	...	...	7
Infective Jaundice	...	...	...	...	4

These are the lowest figures for many years.

Tuberculosis

No new cases were notified.

The following cases were on the register at the end of the year : —

				Male	Female
Pulmonary	...	...	...	4	3
Non-pulmonary	...	...	...	--	2

Venereal Disease

There are facilities for clinic treatment in Barnstaple. We have had no problems regarding venereal disease.

MATERNITY, NURSING and OTHER HEALTH SERVICES

The Health Centre, which opened in 1968, has continued to provide a base for the area's comprehensive health services. The District Nurse:Midwife and the Health Visitor call daily: clinics are held for child health, ante-natal care, chiropody and speech therapy. A retirement clinic, for people in the 65—70 age group, was started during the year. The Health Centre is also used by the Family Planning Association, the Marriage Guidance Council and the local Red Cross Association.

MEALS ON WHEELS.

The meals-on-wheels service continued to serve mid-day meals twice weekly to elderly and needy folk in their own homes. About 11 elderly people were served each week.

AMBULANCE SERVICE.

The work done by our ambulance in 1969 has been well above the average of the past five years.

	1969	1968	1967	1966	1965
Patients carried during the year	843	842	806	810	632
Total mileage	16,211	19,054	17,947	16,428	14,903

TORRINGTON COTTAGE HOSPITAL.

The maternity department was closed down in 1968. The following table indicates the work done in recent years.

	1969	1968	1967	1966	1965
Patients admitted during the year	243	236	216	194	130
New out-patients	386	469	355	299	210
Total out-patient attendances ...	923	893	891	817	736

NATIONAL BLOOD TRANSFUSION SERVICE.

The South-Western Division of the National Blood Transfusion Service came to Torrington twice during the year. A total of 193 donors gave blood—104 men and 89 women.

	1969	1968	1967	1966	1965
Total donations:—	193	181	167	103	84

FACTORIES ACT, 1961. Part I of the Act.

1—INSPECTIONS for purposes of provisions as to health (including inspections made by Public Health Inspectors)

Premises (1)	Number on Register (2)	Number of		
		Inspections (3)	Written notices (4)	Occupiers prosecuted (5)
(i) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities .. Non-Power	3	—	—	—
(ii) Factories not included in (i) to which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority Power	19	7	—	—
(iii) Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding outworkers' premises) Building sites etc.	2	—	—	—
TOTAL	24	7	NIL	NIL

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2—CASES IN WHICH DEFECTS WERE FOUND

Particulars	Number of cases in which defects were found			Number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted
	Found	Remedied	Referred To H.M. Inspector By H.M. Inspector	

RAINFALL.

Details of rainfall during recent years are as follows :—

	1969	1968	1967	1966
January ...	5.38	3.84	2.78	3.13
February ...	3.13	1.62	4.93	4.59
March ...	3.22	2.99	2.47	1.40
April ...	2.25	2.45	1.32	5.34
May ...	4.90	2.34	4.09	2.81
June ...	1.76	5.37	0.66	2.77
July ...	4.03	4.02	1.90	2.06
August ...	2.60	1.46	2.46	3.77
September ...	2.95	6.74	4.96	2.23
October ...	0.41	3.76	10.28	4.84
November ...	6.28	2.22	3.39	3.08
December ...	4.23	4.62	4.16	5.03
Total ...	<u>41.14</u>	<u>41.43</u>	<u>43.40</u>	<u>41.03</u>

The rainfall in May was very high; - the second highest total for the month since records started in 1900. The highest May total was 4.96 inches in 1942.

The total of 0.41 in October, on the other hand, was the lowest on record for that month.

Total rainfall for the year was about average.

SEWERAGE AND SEWAGE DISPOSAL.

Considerable development is taking place in the town and not the least of such development is at the Unigate Dairy. Additional milk drying plant has been installed and this will bring about a great increase in the effluent to be treated. There has been close co-operation between the Dairy Company and the Borough Council, together with their respective engineers and consultants, and plant is now being installed at the Dairy where the effluent will be pre-treated to reduce the strength to such a degree that our own sewage treatment plant can be operated on single filtration instead of double alternating filtration.

As a result of this change, there will be sufficient capacity at the disposal works to deal with the additional dairy effluent and also the sewage from the anticipated residential development in the south east area.

WATER SUPPLY.

The Borough is supplied with water by the North Devon Water Board and, generally, the supply has been very good. The summer was quite good weatherwise and this caused the usual shortage of water. It is to be hoped that the proposals for the construction of a large reservoir on Dartmoor may soon be approved so that adequate storage may be provided.

19 samples were taken during the year and all gave first-class results.

The water is not plumbo-solvent and contains neither fluorine, nor any deleterious substances.

PREVENTION OF DAMAGE BY PESTS ACT 1949.

The rodent operator who was employed jointly by the Rural and Borough Councils has retired from the full-time appointment, but has been re-engaged by the Borough Council on a part-time basis.

Regular inspections of properties are still carried out. No serious infestation has been found and any complaints have been quickly dealt with.

HOUSING.

The main progress in housing arose from the completion of 43 new houses and bungalows at Dartington Fields and Greenbank. It has been necessary to charge rents of £4 per week and upwards for the houses. Anticipated industrial development did not coincide with the availability of houses, and the general waiting list for council housing shrunk. Arrangements were made with Barnstaple Corporation and with Northam U. D. C. to take, temporarily, a few key workers from their waiting lists and the extensive publicity that this move received ensured no lack of applicants for the houses remaining. The temporary tenants were rehoused near their workplaces later in the year. The co-operation of these Councils and their Officers is appreciated. In the closing weeks of the year a start was made on old people's bungalows at Torridge View. When available these will meet a real need.

During the year the Council made a Closing Order in respect of one privately owned cottage. The owner appealed to County Court against the Order, but lost the action.

Owners of older houses and flats which lack certain basic amenities — such as bathrooms, indoor W.C.'s, and piped hot water services — have for many years been offered inducements to bring their houses up to a minimum improved standard, by way of grants of money. During the year more generous Grants were introduced, accompanied by a relaxation of some of the conditions. This Council has reason to be proud of its past record in encouraging owners to use the Improvement Grants available and the changes mentioned will ensure a continuing activity in modernising older properties.

INSPECTION OF MEAT AND OTHER FOODS.

Carcases and Offal inspected and condemned in whole or in part.

	<i>Cattle excluding Cows</i>	<i>Cows</i>	<i>Calves</i>	<i>Sheep and Lambs</i>	<i>Pigs</i>
Number killed	17,207	3,412	234	127,501	63,095
Number inspected	17,207	3,412	234	127,501	63,095
All Diseases except Tuberculosis and Cysticercosis					
Whole carcases condemned	19	71	71	670	210
Carcases of which some part or organ was con- demned	11,171	3,219	36	17,682	20,104
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than Tuber- culosis and Cysticercosis	65.03	96.42	45.73	14.71	32.20
Tuberculosis					
Whole carcases condemned	—	—	—	—	—
Carcases of which some part or organ was con- demned	—	1	—	—	520
Percentage of the number inspected affected with Tuberculosis	—	0.03	—	—	0.82
Cysticercosis					
Carcases of which some part or organ was con- demned	3	—	—	—	—
Carcases submitted to treat- ment by refrigeration	3	—	—	—	—
Generalised and totally condemned	—	—	—	—	—

MEAT INSPECTION

Full inspection of all animals slaughtered in the district was again carried out during 1969 by the Council's meat inspection staff.

Over

MEAT INSPECTION *Continued*

The throughput at the large private abattoir increased quite materially over that of 1968. The most significant increase was in the number of cattle slaughtered, as inspection of these animals is more involved than in pigs and sheep.

During the year work commenced on the construction of a large new "boning room" at the abattoir. This will come into operation during 1970 and when in full production a further increase in throughput, again particularly cattle, can consequently be expected during next year.

The total weight of meat and offal condemned during the year was 159 tons, 2 quarters, 19 lbs., including the whole carcasses of 71 cows, 19 other cattle, 71 calves, 670 sheep and 210 pigs.

TABLE OF CONDEMNED FOODSTUFFS

14	Chicken	57	Pkts. Various vegetables
16	Pkts. Various rissoles	16	„ Meat pies
22	„ Beef-burgers & steaklets	20	„ Braised beef
4	„ Faggots	42	„ Fish & chips, Cod fillets etc.
4	„ Skinless beef sausages	4	„ Dinners for one
103	„ Fish fillets & Fish fingers	10	„ Quarters of chicken
2	„ Sausage rolls	16	„ Chocolate rolls & mousse
10	„ Puff pastry	4	„ Pork sausage meat

All the above were condemned because of a failure of a refrigeration plant.

10 lbs	Ox Kidney	Decomposition
21 lbs	Two Rumps of Beef	„
6 lbs	Corned Beef	„
20 lbs	Cooked Ham	„

THE OFFICES, SHOPS & RAILWAY PREMISES ACT, 1963.

Appendix I—Prescribed Statistical Information
TABLE A—REGISTRATIONS AND GENERAL INSPECTIONS

Class of Premises (1)	Number of premises regis- tered during the year (2)	Total number of registered pre- mises at end of year (3)	Number of registered pre- mises receiving a general inspection dur- ing the year (4)
Offices	—	6	—
Retail Shops	1	23	4
Wholesale Shops, Warehouses	—	—	—
Catering Establishments open to the public, canteens	—	2	—
Fuel Storage Depots	—	—	—
TOTALS	1	31	4

**TABLE B—NUMBER OF VISITS OF ALL KINDS BY INSPECTORS TO
REGISTERED PREMISES**

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**TABLE C—ANALYSIS OF PERSONS EMPLOYED IN REGISTERED
PREMISES BY WORKPLACE**

Class of Workplace (1)	Number of Persons Employed (2)
Offices	26
Retails Shops	82
Wholesale Departments, Warehouses	1
Catering Establishments open to the public	12
Canteens	—
Fuel Storage Depots	—
TOTAL	121
TOTAL MALES	54
TOTAL FEMALES	67

SUMMARY OF VISITS AND INSPECTIONS MADE DURING THE YEAR.

Allotments and Fields	...	...	...	...	10
Building Regulations and Planning Matters	...				87
Caravan Sites	...	...	...	...	7
Cattle and Pannier Markets	...	...	...		63
Cemetery and Churchyard	...	...	...		77
Disinfection & Disinfestation	...	...	...		12
Drain Testing and Inspecting	...	...	...		15
Factories	...	...	...	...	7
Food Premises and Food Inspection	...	...			22
Housing	...	...	...	...	1125
Improvement Grants	...	...	...	...	93
Industrial Development	...	...	...	...	70
Meat Inspection	...	...	...	...	57
Miscellaneous	...	...	...	...	28
New Building Work	...	...	...	...	47
Nuisances (including obstructed drains)				...	43
Offices, Shop & Railway Premises Act				...	11
Petroleum Licensing and Storage			...	...	6
Playing Field	...	...	...	...	42
Public Conveniences	...	...	...	...	9
Refuse Collection and Disposal			...	...	36
Rodent Control	...	...	...	...	2
Sewerage and Sewage Disposal			...	...	134
Street Lighting	...	...	...	...	26
Water	...	...	...	...	13
Total					2,042

